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How to Provide Feedback

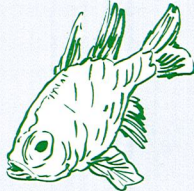
This brochure is an opportunity for you to have a say on the proposal outlined for the management of boat users that access southern Bills Bay, Ningaloo Marine Park.

What Makes an Effective Submission?

To ensure your submission is as effective as possible:

- ★ make it **clear and concise**;
- ★ **list your points** according to the subject section in the brochure;
- ★ **describe briefly each subject** or issue you wish to discuss;
- ★ say whether you **agree** or **disagree** with any of the information provided in the brochure and clearly state your reasons (particularly if you disagree) and give sources of information where possible; and
- ★ **suggest alternative options/approaches** to deal with the issue with which you may disagree.

Each submission is important, but those that give reasons for concerns, give support where appropriate, and offer information and constructive suggestions will be more useful.



What Happens to Your Submission?

All submissions will be summarised according to the topics outlined in the brochure. An analysis and summary of submissions will be prepared. The Reference Group will be consulted and the report will then be forwarded to the Marine Parks and Reserves Authority (MPRA) and the Minister for the Environment and Heritage for consideration. If a submission is marked "CONFIDENTIAL" the author will remain anonymous.

Deadline

Submissions are welcome for a four-week period following the public release of the brochure.

Deadline: Friday 30th August 2002

For inquiries please phone (08) 9334 0151.

Where to Send Your Submission

Written submissions should be sent to:

Executive Director

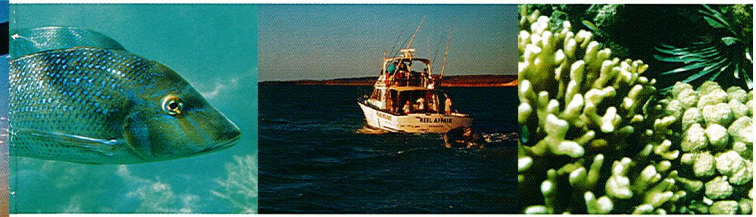
Department of Conservation & Land Management
Locked Bag 104,
Bentley Delivery Centre
Western Australia 6983

Attention: Policy Project Officer,
Park Policy & Tourism

Or Emailed to: elena@calm.wa.gov.au,
Subject: Coral Bay Boating Strategy comments

Coral Bay

BOATING STRATEGY



Have your say



Long and short-term strategies have been developed to address these issues.

The Coral Bay Boating Strategy outlines the management initiatives that are being introduced as interim measures until alternative infrastructure is provided for all boat users.

A reference group involving representatives of tourism operators, commercial and recreational fishers and Government agencies was established. The reference group has considered a set of guidelines that aim to ensure people can continue to enjoy the waters of southern Bills Bay in safety while at the same time conserving the Bay's natural environment for present and future generations.

This strategy has been prepared to address these concerns, while an environmental assessment review over proposals for an alternative boat launching facility in the Coral Bay area proceeds.

People are invited to submit their comments to the Department of Conservation and Land Management. The brochure includes a section on "How to provide feedback" and contact details for people wishing to comment on the proposed strategy.

- Some of the key management issues are:
- ★ public safety, especially to swimmers, snorkellers and divers;
 - ★ damage to the Ningaloo reef;
 - ★ natural limitations on access to southern Bills Bay and the increasing number of boat users in the area. This raises a need for equity among users of the Bay including commercial operators such as tourist charter boats and commercial fishers; and
 - ★ the capacity of the Bay to tolerate any increase in boating and recreational activity.

The increasing numbers of visitors, and their impact in and around the Maud Sanctuary Zone (MSZ) in the waters of Bills Bay has become a major concern, not only to the Coral Bay community, but also the wider community.

There are many initiatives being proposed for the Coral Bay area. These include the State Government's recently announced \$7.5 million for a sewerage treatment plant, the public environmental review process for an alternative boat launching facility and the review of the Ningaloo Marine Park Management Plan.

Implementing all of these measures will take time.

Meanwhile, there is a more immediate need to manage boating activities in the Coral Bay area in response to the area's popularity as a tourism destination. The increase in visitor numbers has led to an increase in the potential conflict with swimmers, snorkellers, divers and boat users.

To address the safety concerns of these users, it would be preferable to relocate all boats that access southern Bills Bay. However, at present there is not an alternative facility to service vessels or allow boat users to launch and retrieve their vessels.



The waters of Bills Bay at Coral Bay are among the most popular areas in the Ningaloo Marine Park, attracting thousands of visitors each year. Conserving the distinctive features of the Bay, particularly the beauty of its coral reef and myriad of marine life, is a responsibility for everyone.

Ningaloo Marine Park - Maud Sanctuary Zone

Long term strategy

The long-term strategy is to provide for activities that are compatible with the conservation of the ecological and social values of the Maud Sanctuary Zone. These activities include low-impact tourism and recreation such as swimming, snorkelling, scuba diving from the beach, canoeing, sea kayaking and commercial activities such as coral viewing vessels.

Short term strategies

The short-term strategies are addressed in the boating strategy.

The Boating Strategy in Brief

Recreational Users:

- Users can access the restricted area (see map) for launching and retrieving vessels only.
- Anchoring will not be permitted in the restricted area.
- No vessels with a draft greater than 1.2 m will be permitted.
- Private moorings will not be approved.

Tourism Licensed Vessels:

- Only existing Coral Bay licensed operators will be eligible for a mooring site licence.
- Vessels will require approval to moor in the Bay.
- Alternative mooring areas will be set aside from southern Bills Bay (eg. Monck Head south of Bills Bay) for those vessels that are not permitted to moor in the Bay.
- All vessels will need an approved operational plan to access southern Bills Bay.
- Anchoring will not be permitted in the restricted area (see map).

Commercial Fishing Vessels:

- All permitted commercial fishing vessels will have to moor at a site other than in southern Bills Bay, for example Monck Head.
- All vessels will require an approved operational plan if they choose to access southern Bills Bay.
- Anchoring will not be permitted in the restricted area (see map).



Management for Specific User Groups

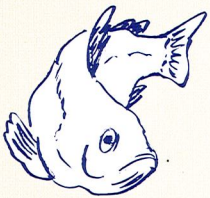
Recreational Users

- Vessels with a draft of greater than 1.2m will require a permit to access the restricted area (see map).
- Vessels with a draft equal to or less than 1.2m will be allowed to launch and retrieve their vessel and must comply with regulations for anchoring, beach anchoring and mooring.
- Private moorings will not be permitted within the MSZ. This is in line with the current Ningaloo Marine Park Management Plan.

Commercial Tourism and Fishing Charters

- Restricted E class licence holders with approved vessels with drafts equal to or less than 1.2m will be allowed to moor within southern Bills Bay, by way of a mooring site licence.
- When existing restricted E class licence holders seek approval for a replacement vessel that has a draft greater than 1.2m, the replacement vessel will be required to moor at a site outside southern Bills Bay.
- Approved operational plans will determine conditions of access to southern Bills Bay for all vessels.
- Non-restricted T class commercial tourism operators will not be allowed to access southern Bills Bay unless 'historical usage' can be shown.
- The number of commercial charter operators (fishing and tourism) and vessels permitted to operate from Coral Bay will not increase from the current level of usage.

This also applies to the number of mooring sites associated with these vessels. Operators that are dually licensed by the Department of Fisheries and the Department of Conservation and Land Management and use the same vessel for fishing and tourism charters, will be allowed to continue current operations with the one vessel i.e. one vessel, one mooring for all of these licences (similar to the commercial fishing vessels).



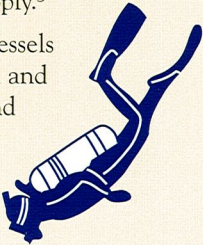
Commercial Fishing (LFBs)

- LFB's will be required to apply for a mooring site within the MSZ mooring control area. No mooring sites will be approved within southern Bills Bay. The mooring will be required to meet environmental criteria, at an approved mooring site.
- LFB's will require a permit to access the "restricted area". Access will be permitted only for activities such as unloading catches and refuelling and will depend upon approved operational plans.
- A specific area will be designated for unloading catches and refuelling for approved LFB's. Owners of dinghies used in association with commercial fishing operations can obtain permission to beach anchor in an area designated for that purpose.
- The number of LFB's permitted to access southern Bills Bay restricted area will not increase from the current level of usage. Mooring sites will be allocated to these vessels. If commercial fishing vessels are currently licensed to undertake fishing and tourism charters using the same vessel, then only one vessel will be permitted for access and mooring.

Following is a more detailed outline of what is proposed:

All Users

- Access to the MSZ for all¹ vessels with a draft of greater than 1.2m will be restricted unless the operator (vessel owner or their nominee) has approval from the Department of Conservation and Land Management. People applying for access permits will need to submit an operational plan that will be considered before a permit is approved. The permits will also involve certain conditions (eg times of the day when access is permitted to ensure that the risk to swimmers and damage to the environment are minimised).
- All vessels with a draft equal to or less than 1.2m can be launched and retrieved at the southern Bills Bay access point of the restricted area (see map). Signs on the beach will identify the access point.
- Anchoring, mooring or beach anchoring will not be permitted in the restricted area, except with approval from the Department of Conservation and Land Management or in an emergency. Penalties apply.²
- No moorings are to be installed in the Marine Park without approval from the Department of Conservation and Land Management. All users will need to apply and register for mooring sites within the mooring control area. Mooring sites in the mooring control area will be licensed. The current Ningaloo Marine Park Management Plan does not allow for private individual moorings within the MSZ. Penalties apply.³
- The number of licensed commercial vessels (i.e. commercial fishing boats, tourism and fishing charters) that require access and moorings within the MSZ mooring control area will not increase from the current level of usage.
- The number of licensed commercial vessels in each user group (ie. commercial fishing boats, tourism and fishing charters) will not increase from the current level of usage.
- Moorings installed (following approval) will need to meet environmental and safety standards.



1 Except private vessels with a draft of greater than 1.2m, which will not be permitted to access southern Bills Bay. The users of these vessels will be permitted to access via tender/dinghy only.
2 Refer to the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002
3 Refer to the Conservation and Land Management Regulations 2002

